

Title: **Untangling the Web: evaluating a graduate teaching skills programme**

Presenters: **Rowena Seabrook and Kathy Kingstone**
University of Cambridge

Abstract:

Session Learning outcomes

Participants will reflect on their own practice and learn from that of others in the following topics areas:

- Evaluation of SD effectiveness in teaching programmes
- Development programmes for graduate students
- At what stage in an academic career is SD activity appropriate

Specifically they will explore a way of evaluating a teaching and learning staff development activity where a direct effect on undergraduates can not be used as an evaluation measure.

Session Outline

We will present the graduate development programme at Cambridge University (described in Williams & Elvidge, 2006 and based on the work by Nyquist & Wulff and Goodall & Elvidge) and our efforts to evaluate the impact that this has had on undergraduate teaching. Graduate students provide only a small part of the cascade of learning that an undergraduate experiences – trying to untangle the usefulness (and ultimately cost effectiveness) of our programme has proved a challenge. As the diversity of teaching resources in undergraduate programmes increases, understanding the effects due to staff development activity will become increasingly hard. The timing of such activities is also crucial. Our evaluation has demonstrated that early engagement with teaching and learning issues is appropriate and welcomed. Participants continue to seek ways to improve these skills after the event and are clear such opportunities should be departmentally based. We will present ways of involving staff development in such a scenario.

Session Activities and Approximate Timings

- Presentation of Graduate Development Programme and its evaluation – 15 mins
- Activity 1: small group discussion of evaluation with reference to untangling effects from different learning and teaching initiatives (for example lectures, seminars, e-learning). Highlighting problems and good practice - 15 mins
- Presentation of a CPD pathway - 5 mins
- Activity 2: small group discussion of where in the career path SD ‘intervention’ is appropriate and most effective - 10 mins

References

Goodall, R. & Elvidge, E. 1999 *Developing Postgraduates’ Teaching Skills in the Sciences*. Norwich: Centre for Staff and Educational Development

Nyquist, J. & Wulff, D. 1996 *Working effectively with graduate assistants*. London: Sage

Williams, E. & Elvidge, E. 2006 Training graduate students to teach: an effective model *Educational Developments* 6.4,16-18